

Vault
BX
8609
A1
no. 1

TO THE
FOLLOWERS
OF THE
“LATTER DAY SAINTS.”

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBOURS,

Language is not sufficiently strong to express my sorrow (after an absence of some months, on my return home) at hearing accounts of the delusion 'practised by persons calling themselves “Latter day Saints,” in the neighbouring parishes of Boddington, the Leigh, Elmstone Hardwick, Norton, Apperley, Twigworth, &c.

I understand that twelve Americans have arrived in Liverpool, in imitation of the twelve Apostles, bringing with them a book, called the Book of Mormon, or Golden Bible. These men are anxious to collect money for the purchase of land in their own country, and to kidnap you and your families for its cultivation; as in that part of America, which is a wilderness, filled with bears and other wild animals, labourers are not to be obtained. (BEWARE of signing *any* paper, or giving them goods or money.) They therefore, delude you, with the hope of living with Christ on the banks of the Mississippi, in glory and happiness, for one thousand years.

Money, is evidently the object of these “Latter Day Saints.” From my own personal knowledge, in Herefordshire, they have plundered three families, and left them in a state of most abject poverty; one, a respectable farmer, has paid to them two hundred pounds, and two families in the parish of Bosley, have given them every shilling they possessed and will be probably obliged to go into the Union House, having nothing left but the clothes on their backs. In corroboration of this statement, have they not, my friends, obtained money from you? and

what becomes of the money, sometimes amounting to ten pounds a night, collected at their gatherings? Perhaps you are not aware that the Americans generally, are the most cunning and money-getting people in the world, and their lies are quite astounding. I will give you the story, invented by Kentucky Tom, of the famous Sea Serpent. This man was captain of an American Ship, trading to Liverpool, and in one of his voyages, said he discovered a new Island in the Ocean; it was advertised in all the newspapers, and he declared that people, from all nations, went to settle on the Island, where land was to be had for nothing. After living there several years, they discovered, one fine morning, that the Island had two large eyes, like unto a serpent; it appeared he had just awoke from a long sleep, after having gorged himself with a dozen ships and their crews. When he saw the town that was built on his back, not quite liking such a burden, he wagged his tail and went to the bottom of the sea, with town, people, and crops, and from that day to this, Tom has never found out another Island.

I understand, from the hearers of these preachers, that they tell different tales of the revelation they have received, both as to its origin and contents. In some places, they state the book to have been discovered, by them, under a stone, and those who find it are Prophets; but the book itself, gives a different account; sometimes their followers are to be conveyed to the new Jersusalem in a flying ship, to alight on the top of Coombe Hill, which you all know is five hundred feet above the level of the sea; all are to get into this ship and on its departure, Gloucestershire is to be burnt up; at other times, the sea is to divide, a road, with a brick wall on one side, and water on the other, is to be formed for you to pass over to America, the land of promise. Now, my good friends, you may not know that it is two thousand miles to America, and the Atlantic Ocean, through which you must pass, is four miles deep, so that

the brick wall will be four miles high; I hope, for your sakes, more than one brick thick; this certainly beats Kentucky Tom. They have also ordained persons, who can neither read or write, priests, after the order of Aaron; in direct opposition to that gospel which they *pretend* to preach; and one of these priests, had the folly and presumption, to tell a Farmer, an acquaintance of my own, that, if he and his family did not receive baptism from *him*, they must all be damned; they also say, if all the blood be drawn out of your veins, and the spirit poured in, you would become spiritual bodies, and live for a thousand years. What utter nonsense! and how contrary to Scripture! God says, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" and our Saviour declares "that which is born of the flesh, is flesh." I should have doubted your believing such lies, had I not known of dozens being baptized, as an evidence of their faith.

The Book of Mormon, now before me, which I have had great difficulty in obtaining, printed by Oliver Cowdry, at Kirtland, Ohio, a Slave Settlement bordering on Kentucky, the Land of Invention, in America, *is said* to be handed down by an Angel from God, to Oliver Cowdry, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, in the presence of eight other witnesses, Christian Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Peter Whitmer, John Whitmer, Hiram Page, Joseph Smith, Hiram Smith, Samuel H. Smith; and 5,000 copies of the same were printed. You will observe, that it is not mentioned where this event happened, or the residence of these persons. Parts of this book are complete nonsense, though written in imitation of Scriptural language, and interlarded with passages from the Old and New Testaments,—a most dangerous work in the hands of those who are not well read in the Bible.

The wife of the very man who wrote the Book of Mormon, is now living in Massachussets, N.A., and she has declared most solemnly that the whole is an infamous deception. The book was

compiled by Solomon Spaulding, as an imaginary History of an Ancient People, written in the most ancient language, the language of the Bible. He lent the manuscript to a printer to read, who, without his knowledge, copied it, and after Solomon Spaulding's death, printed it, as a speculation to make money. The author's brother, Mr. John Spaulding, was amazed and grieved at the wicked purpose to which the printer had put this work, and, with S. Spaulding's widow, made an attested declaration of the falsehood and deceit practised by the printer; but, to convince you all of the dangerous deception of these preachers, I am perfectly willing to meet them in your presence, at *noon* day, at any place they will appoint, and promise them a good humoured and civil reception. Should they decline accepting this offer, I shall feel it my duty as a Magistrate, though a well-known friend to religious toleration and education, to enforce the law for the protection of my deluded neighbours, against the temporal destitution with which they are threatened.

Having assisted you on many occasions in times of difficulty and distress, I earnestly hope you will take this warning in good part, and let me entreat you to attend regularly in your respective neighbourhoods those *settled* places of worship, where the Gospel is preached.

Having heard that these "Latter-Day Saints" keep the Book of Mormon to themselves, but preach to you from it, I beg to say, you are perfectly welcome to see the book, at my house, where I will explain to you its cunning and its falsehood.

I remain,

Friends and Neighbours,

Yours, faithfully,

D. L. ST. CLAIR,

Staverton Court,

Captain Royal Navy.

Oct. 14th, 1840.